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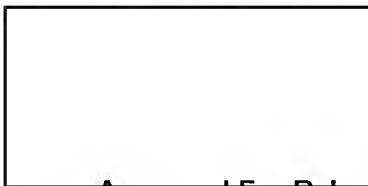
DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

Top Secret

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20 February 1969



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Approved For Release 2004/01/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013100100003-2

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Approved For Release 2004/01/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013100100003-2

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MIDDLE EAST: DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE ROLE OF THE FOUR POWERS ARE BECOMING AN OBSTACLE TO THE EFFORT TO START NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.

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THE FRENCH NOW WANT TO DELAY FOUR-POWER DISCUSSIONS UNTIL DE GAULLE HAS MET WITH PRESIDENT NIXON. PARIS PREVIOUSLY HAD URGED IMMEDIATE FOUR-WAY TALKS AT LEAST FOR TACKLING THE PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS OF MOVING TOWARD PEACE. THE FRENCH EXPECT LITTLE FROM JARRING, HOWEVER, AND ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE US BID TO CONVENE THE FOUR POWERS AT THE UN WITH THE LIMITED OBJECTIVE OF GIVING HIM NEW ENCOURAGEMENT. THE DECISION WAS APPARENTLY MADE BY DE GAULLE, WHO IS SAID TO BE "NOT AT ALL PLEASED" AT WHAT HE BELIEVES IS US HESITANCY TO ENTER SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS.

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TOGETHER WITH THE FRENCH, THE SOVIETS AND THE BRITISH ALSO PREFER TO HAVE THE FOUR POWERS ASSUME THE MAJOR ROLE IN PROMOTING A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. OF THE FOUR, THE US IS ALONE IN ITS DESIRE TO RELAUNCH JARRING. THE ISRAELIS HAVE THREATENED NOT TO ENGAGE IN SUBSTANTIVE TALKS WITH JARRING IF FOUR-POWER TALKS IN NEW YORK TAKE PLACE SIMULTANEOUSLY. THEY HAVE HINTED, HOWEVER, THAT IF JARRING WOULD RENEW CONTACTS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST PARTIES FREE OF GREAT POWER INFLUENCE, THEY WOULD OFFER CONCESSIONS TO THE ARABS. THE ISRAELIS HAVE BEEN DISTURBED THAT TALKS AMONG THE FOUR WILL LEAD TO AN IMPOSED SETTLEMENT WITHOUT NEGOTIATION OF A BINDING AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTY STATES.

IF JARRING RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM THE GREAT POWERS FAIRLY SOON, HE HAS SAID THAT HE WILL START A NEW ROUND OF TALKS. IF NOT, HE PROBABLY WILL RETURN TO HIS DIPLOMATIC POST IN MOSCOW, AND THUS THE MOMENTUM OF CURRENT EFFORTS WOULD BE LOST. JARRING WOULD PREFER THAT THE FOUR PRODUCE GUIDELINES FOR HIM ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTION.

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